

SCC

PROFESSIONAL VISITOR'S GUIDE

The Special Commitment Center

Pierce County, Washington

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Contents of this document were accurate at the time of publication. Please contact the SCC Legal Coordinator if you have any questions or need further information about arrangements for a visit.

SCC Policy 224, *Professional Visiting* governs all contents of this document.

WELCOME

Our Mission

The Special Commitment Center (SCC) provides comprehensive, rehabilitative therapy to civilly committed sex offenders in a constitutionally sound environment that protects the safety and welfare of the public, staff and residents.

In addition to those residents who are civilly committed under RCW 71.09, SCC also receives persons who are court-assigned to the custody of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) for commitment evaluations under RCW 71.09.

Visiting overview

The SCC is a secure facility. This is a unique evaluation and treatment program for sexually violent predators. We carefully oversee our visiting program to ensure your safety and the safety of the citizens of the surrounding community.

Our location

The SCC is operated by DSHS and is located near the center of McNeil Island.

McNeil Island lies near the town of Steilacoom, about 13 miles southwest of Tacoma, Washington.

Transportation to the island

Visitors are to report to the Steilacoom Dock.

The state-operated ferry is the only regular access to the island. The crossing from the Steilacoom Dock to McNeil Island takes about 20 minutes. From the island dock you will be provided transportation to the SCC facility by bus.

How to arrange for a visit

When you contact us, we will send you SCC Policy 224 *Professional Visiting*.

All visitors must be approved prior to visiting.

- The Superintendent or designee has final authority over visiting decisions, waivers and exceptions (refer to SCC Policy 224 *Professional Visiting*).
- Visitors must have a “clear” report, with no criminal history. We conduct visitor background checks through:
 - ✓ The National Crime Information Center (NCIC)
 - ✓ The Washington State Crime Information Center
 - ✓ Other agencies and resources, as appropriate

Arranging your visits

When you are notified that you have been cleared, contact the legal coordinator's office to schedule an appointment. Prior coordination will prevent a wasted trip.

Appointments for professional visits are available Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. If a holiday falls on a weekday, there is no professional visiting.

On the day you visit – *Check in and transportation*

Parking

Paid parking is available to professional visitors in the lot located on the West side of the Dupont-Steilacoom Road (Union Avenue).

Professional visitors may not park in the staff parking lots located on the East side of the Dupont-Steilacoom Road (Union Avenue). The Town of Steilacoom will issue a parking ticket if you do so.

Visitors are not allowed to travel to McNeil Island unless processed through the Steilacoom Dock House.

- You must arrive at the Steilacoom Dock 10-15 minutes before the boat departure is scheduled. Only **approved** visitors will be allowed to board the boat.
- You must provide *proper photo identification*. Acceptable forms of identification are any unexpired ONE of these:
 - Photo drivers license or state ID card (any US state/territory)
 - Federal agency identification card
 - Alien Registration Receipt card
 - Passport
 - Tribal identification
 - Military picture identification card
- You must completely and legibly fill out the sign-in sheet at the dock house.
- Unauthorized items (cameras, radios, tape recorders, cell phones, wireless communication devices, electronic items, intoxicants, narcotics, dangerous drugs, firearms, explosives, weapons of any type, items identified as a safety/security risk, etc.) may *not* be brought to McNeil Island without prior approval; you should leave them at home or lock them in your vehicle.
- For safety, the SCC staff routinely conducts searches of visitors. Visitors will be asked to pass through an electronic scanner before proceeding to the waiting area. Electronic searches are a matter of routine. Hand carried items will be opened and inspected. **Refusal to comply with a search will result in denial of a visit.**
- Suspicion of criminal activity may result in other searches and possible reporting to law enforcement officials.

Visitors with pacemakers must notify the SCC staff upon arrival at the Steilacoom Dockhouse and before being processed through the scanner.

On the day of the visit – *Property and Dress Rules*

Medication

Professional visitors may bring only prescription medication, prescribed for them, in the original container in an amount necessary during the visit.

Food

Professional visitors may bring food, or purchase from vending machines in the visiting room, for their own consumption. Food is not to be shared with or given to residents.

Clothing

We wish all visitors to enjoy a non-offensive environment, and expect visitors to dress appropriately. To speed processing and ensure safety and security, we limit the kinds of clothing a visitor may wear.

Failure to follow these rules will result in denial of a visit.

General dress

1. **Male** visitors must be clothed in full length pants, shoes, and sleeved shirts. Tank tops are not permitted. Proper under garments must be worn. Shoes must be worn at all times; footwear such as flip-flops are not acceptable.
2. **Female** visitors must wear a dress or combination of top and pants or skirt. Dresses, skirts, or pants must extend below the knee when seated. Tank tops and low-cut clothing that reveals cleavage are not allowed. Proper under garments must be worn. Shoes must be worn at all times; footwear such as flip-flops are not acceptable. Heels over 1½" are prohibited for safety reasons.
3. All clothing must be clean and in good repair. Buttons, zippers and closures must be fastened to the degree necessary to maintain modesty.
4. Provocative or suggestive clothing is not permitted. This includes clothing that states or depicts:
 - a. Sexual behavior or innuendo
 - b. Aggressive or violent behavior
 - c. Frightening/ death-related subjects such as skulls, bones, blood, or carnage
 - d. Alcohol or illegal drug use, including names of alcoholic beverages or images of illegal substances such as marijuana leaves
 - e. Images of firearms or knives
 - f. Anything reflecting unlawful behavior
 - g. Racist or sexist innuendoes
 - h. Religious statements (small symbols such as a Cross, Star of David, or a pentagon are exempt)
 - i. Logos of any federal/ state /local government agencies (small pin-on item exempt), unless employed by that agency
 - j. Political statements

Clothing which is not allowed for wear at SCC

- Items with holes, rip, or tears
- See-through clothing
- Provocative (tight), revealing or high/low-cut clothing or clothing that reveals undergarments, cleavage, thighs, back or midriff
- Shorts, “cut-offs”
- Culottes or skirts that expose the knee when seated
- Dresses/skirts with slits extending above the knee
- Wrap-around skirts or dresses
- Tank tops, sleeveless tops or shirts, halter-tops
- Flip-flops, shower shoes, quilted snow/foul weather shoes/boots
- Sheer, transparent or mesh fabrics (other than hose or tights when worn with skirt/pants)
- Stirrup pants or leggings
- Camouflage clothing
- Bibbed attire (overalls)
- Money belts or compartmented belts
- Excessive jewelry or non-searchable jewelry styles
- Headbands or excessive hair ornamentation

On the day of the visit – *Boat and Bus Rules*

On the boat

- You must wait until instructed to board the boat
- You must sit while the boat is underway
- Passengers are not allowed to lie down or place their feet on the seats/benches

On the bus

During transport you must remain seated until the driver has stopped the bus and opened the doors.

Visiting room procedures

An SCC staff person supervises the visiting area and has authority to intervene where necessary to preserve order and the rules. This includes redirecting visitors and residents as necessary. Visiting staff may terminate a professional visit if a visitor does not follow rules.

Residents are searched by metal detector before and after visits and will be body-scanned following visits. Pat searches can be done for security reasons at any time. Residents are escorted from the visiting area gate to the visiting room.

Gifts and Packages

- Unless previously arranged through the legal coordinator, a professional visitor may not give papers or other documents to the resident to take back to his/her room without prior approval.
- Professional visitors may not give a resident any packages, gifts, pictures, notes, computer diskettes, thumb drives, memory cards, or any other item without advance approval by the legal coordinator.

Ferry schedule

From the Steilacoom Dock to McNeil Island

- The ferry leaves Steilacoom at 7:25 am, 9:25 am, 11:25 am, or 1:25 pm. Please arrive at least 10-15 minutes early for processing at the dock house.

From McNeil Island to Steilacoom Dock

- The shuttle leaves the total confinement facility to the ferry at 10:05 am, 12:05 pm, 2:05 pm, and 4:05 pm. Please note, professional visits must conclude by 3:30 pm.

Frequently asked questions

How can I learn more about visiting or get a question answered?

You are expected to comply with SCC Policy 224, *Professional Visiting*. That policy and this Guide should answer most of your questions about rules, privileges, and procedures and is available for review at the visiting room desk.

If you have special concerns or questions, you may also email or call the legal coordinator's office Monday through Friday, 8:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

If you find that important information is not available in this Guide, or if it contains any errors, please notify the legal coordinator.

We do our best to keep all information accurate and complete.